

**CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

1. A method for interpreting a natural language query, comprising:

- 5           providing a contextual lexicon and contextual rules;
- receiving the natural language query, the natural language query having a plurality of text;
- tagging the plurality of text using the contextual lexicon and contextual rules;
- creating a structural representation of the plurality of text using a plurality of matrix rules;
- generating a plurality of conceptual phrases to be submitted to an application for interpreting the plurality of conceptual phrases using a plurality of phrase generation rules applied to the structural representation of the plurality of text.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

- formatting the plurality of concept phrases contained in a the concept phrase table to be understood by a search engine or database management systems application, the formatting step creating a formatted concept phrase; and
- submitting the formatted concept phrase to the search engine or database management system to extract information relevant to the concept phrase.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

formatting the plurality of concept phrases contained in a the concept phrase table to be understood by a search engine or database management systems application, the formatting

5 step creating a formatted concept phrase;

submitting the formatted concept phrase to the search engine or database management system to obtain extracted information relevant to the concept phrase;

obtaining the extracted information from the search engine or database management system;

10 generating a plurality of second concept phrases from the extracted information for comparison to the plurality of concept phrases;

comparing the plurality of second concept phrases to the plurality of concept phrases; and

15 ranking the extracted information in order of relevance based on the comparing step.

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4. A computer readable storage medium having a computer program stored thereon for processing natural language queries, that, when loaded on a computer, the computer program causing the computer to perform a method for interpreting a natural language query, the method

5 comprising :

providing a contextual lexicon and contextual rules;

receiving the natural language query, the natural language query having a plurality of text;

tagging the plurality of text using the contextual lexicon and contextual rules;

creating a structural representation of the plurality of text using a plurality of matrix rules;

generating a plurality of conceptual phrases to be submitted to an application for interpreting the plurality of conceptual phrases using a plurality of phrase generation rules applied to the structural representation of the plurality of text.